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LA., FRIDAY MORNING, AUGUST 1, 1969

Ward Campaign Worker Called in by Grand Jury

A volunteer in Charles R. Ward's campaign for the office of district attorney was subpenaed by the Orleans Parish Grand Jury and testified for 40 minutes during a special session Thursday afternoon.

Ernest Williams, 4016 S. Derbigny, said his subpena directed him to appear at 11 a. m. However, he was not called into the jury room until shortly after 4 p.m., after the jury returned from lunch.

In the meantime Williams waited in the Criminal Courts Building, and told reporters he was helping Ward in his campaign on a voluntary basis.

Ward confirmed this but said he did not know why Williams was called to testify. Williams had no comment when he left the jury shortly before 5 p.m. Grand jury proceedings are secret.

The district attorney's office, legal adviser to the jury, was represented in the session by first assistant District Attorney James L. Alcock and assistant district attorneys William R. Alford and John P. Volz.

After Williams left, jurors remained in the jury room for another hour. They disbanded shortly before 6 p.m. and made no report.

None of the assistants would reveal what the jury was investigating.

Williams was represented by attorney Jerome M. Winsberg, who waited outside while he testified.

Ward recently resigned as first assistant district attorney to run against incumbent District Attorney Jim Garrison after Garrison failed to recommend him for a Criminal District Court judgeship.

An interested observer during the session was attorney Milton Masinter, who waited outside the jury room from the time Williams entered until the jury disbanded.

Masinter and another attorney were indicted after Ward's resignation on a charge of corrupt influencing of the former first assistant district attorney in connection with bail bond forfeitures.

There was no indication that the session had anything to do with the forfeitures controversy.

Two federal officials were invited to testify Thursday in the jury's probe of organized crime in New Orleans, but neither appeared.

Alcock and Alford said that United States Attorney Louis C. LaCour and Robert E. Rightmyer, special agent in charge of the New Orleans office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, sent letters to the jury explaining that they declined to appear because their information was privileged.